

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 7 and 14 are amended and claims 15 and 16 are added. No new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended by Examiners Pinheiro and Rada in the April 17 personal interview. Applicant's separate record of the interview is incorporated in the following remarks.

I. Claim Rejections - §103

Claims 1-5, 7 and 10-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Stamper (GB 2334456) in view of Street Fighter EX3 (EX3); and claims 6 and 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Stamper and Street Fighter further in view of Takahiro (JP 2002-325970). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

A. Main Character and Sub Character

Stamper, EX3 and Takahiro do not teach or suggest a main character whose actions are directly controlled by a controller and a sub character, dependent on the main character, but whose actions are dependent on the main character, as is recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 7 and 14.

As disclosed during the personal interview, Stamper merely discloses a character oriented game memory for use in conjunction with computer games, which comprises a

memory facility for storing information concerning the nature of an object to be used in a computer game. (Abstract, and Fig. 1). The Office Action asserts that page 6, line 18-21 and page 9, lines 1-22 discloses a main data carrier and a sub data carrier, however, Applicant respectfully disagrees. Specifically, Stamper discloses that the character oriented game memory is used to store characteristics related to several main characters (page 9, line 24), which are each controlled by the game controller of the game depending on the game player's desire (page 9, line 24 to page 10, line 3). Stamper does not disclose a sub character, dependent on the main character, whose actions are dependent on the main character. In other words, because Stamper discloses that the actions of each character are controlled by a game controller, Stamper merely discloses a plurality of main characters whose information is stored on the character oriented game memory. Thus, Stamper does not disclose the sub character and associated features recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in independent claims 7 and 14.

In EX3, during Tag Matches such as "Critical Battle" disclosed on page 5, EX3 discloses a battle during which the player and the player's partner have several seconds to gang up against the opponent. As discussed with respect to Stamper, EX3 discloses a plurality of main characters, as recited in claim 1. Specifically, because the player and the player's partner are both controlled by game controllers, neither of the players can be said to be a sub character, dependent on a main character, whose actions are dependent on the main character. Thus, EX3 does not disclose the sub character and associated features recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 7 and 14.

Takahiro merely discloses a plurality of game pieces 18A and 18B, which are placed near an RFID reader/writer 16 to transmit saved character features corresponding to a first and second players. The actions of the first and second players are controlled by a first controller 14A and a second controller 14B (paragraph [0025]). In paragraphs [0028] to

[0040], Takahiro merely discloses the method by which information is transferred from the game pieces through the RFID reader 16 and correlated to characteristics of a particular user (14A and 14B). However, nothing in Takahiro teaches or suggests a sub character and associated features as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 7 and 14.

Thus, Stamper, EX3 and Takahiro alone or in combination do not teach or suggest the sub character and associated features recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 7 and 14.

B. Main Data Carrier and Sub Data Carrier

Furthermore, Stamper, EX3 and Takahiro do not teach or suggest a main data carrier and a sub data carrier, wherein the main data carrier and the sub data carrier are separate from each other and the gaming machine, as is recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 7 and 14.

As discussed in great detail above, Stamper, EX3 and Takahiro, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest a sub character. Thus, the applied references do not disclose a sub data carrier, which is separate from a main data carrier and the gaming machine, that stores sub data corresponding to a sub character. Because none of the applied references even suggests gameplay involving a sub character, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention would not have been motivated to include the recited sub data carrier and associated features as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 7 and 14.

Applicant does not concede that the applied references disclose the features of the other dependent claims under rejection. However, it is unnecessary to separately discuss the other dependent claims given the existence of clear distinguishing features in claims 1, 7 and 14.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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